

Message Text

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ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CAB-09 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

DOT-00 INR-11 NSAE-00 RSC-01 FAA-00 NEA-14 SCCT-02

L-03 SS-20 NSC-07 SAM-01 DRC-01 /106 W

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R 041049Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9893

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRN, SP

SUBJ: CIVAIR: AIRPORT SECURITY

REF: STATE A-1043, FEB 5, 1974

STATE TELS 16199, 19941, 20494, 34445, 71852,
159141, AND 159527

MADRID TELS 944, 1417, AND 4789

1. EMBOFF BROUGHT UP AIRPORT SECURITY WITH COL. EMILIO GARCIA-CONDE, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF AIRPORTS, ON AUG. 30, IN CONVERSATION ON ANOTHER SUBJECT REPORTED SEPTEL. CONCERNING RESPONSIBILITY FOR THIS FUNCTION, HE NOTED THAT IT IS DIVIDED. THE MINISTRY OF AIR HAS JURISDICTION OVER THE INNER AREAS OF AIRPORTS LEADING TO FLIGHT LINES TO WHICH GENERAL PUBLIC NOT ADMITTED. DIRECCION GENERAL DE SEGURIDAD," ACCORDING TO GARCIA-CONDE, IS RESPONSIBLE FOR SECURITY IN ALL OTHER AREAS OF INTERNATIONAL AIRPORTS.

2. GARCIA-CONDE ALSO BROUGHT OUT THE OFT-REPEATED SPANISH CONTENTION THAT SPAIN WAS FRIEND OF ALL ARABS AND HENCE COULD AFFORD TO GIVE ANTI-HIJACKING PRECAUTIONS A LOWER PRIORITY, IN VIEW OF FACT SO MUCH TERRORISM OF MIDDLE EAST ORIGIN.

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3. CONCERNING FAA'S NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULE MAKING ON THIS SUBJECT (STATE 16199, A-1043), GARCIA-CONDE VOICED OPINION THAT MATTER DELICATE. WHAT SPAIN DOES WITH ITS OWN AIRLINE ON ITS OWN TERRITORY IS ITS OWN BUSINESS. EMBOFF CONCEDED THAT POINT BUT INDICATED THAT WHAT USG CHOSE TO RECEIVE ON ITS TERRITORY IN THE WAY OF AIRCRAFT WAS EQUALLY ITS BUSINESS. GARCIA-CONDE STATED NO ONE CAN ACHIEVE ABSOLUTE SECURITY, ESPECIALLY AGAINST A COMPETENT TERRORIST OR A "MADMAN" WHEREUPON EMBOFF NOTED EXCELLENT U.S. RECORD ON HIJACKING SINCE PRECAUTIONS TAKEN, AND GAVE GARCIA-CONDE INFORMAL SPANISH TRANSLATION OF SECURITY PRECAUTIONS SET FORTH IN STATE 20494.

4. CONCERNING PRESENT STATE OF SECURITY, HE STATED THAT AIRCRAFT DO NOT TAKE OFF UNTIL ALL PASSENGERS WHO HAVE CHECKED BAGGAGE HAVE BOARDED. SOP REQUIRES THAT SUCH A PASSENGER'S BAGGAGE BE REMOVED FROM THE AIRCRAFT IF HE OR SHE FAILS TO APPEAR.

5. COMMENT: BY COUNTING PASSENGERS AT CHECK-IN, BEFORE BOARDING AND IMMEDIATELY PREVIOUS TO TAKEOFF, IT WOULD BE THEORETICALLY POSSIBLE TO PREVENT SOMEONE FROM PUTTING A SUITCASE WITH A BOMB IN IT ABOARD AN AIRCRAFT AND THEN NOT TAKING THE FLIGHT. IN EMBOFF'S EXPERIENCE THESE PRECAUTIONS SEEM TO BE TAKEN AT MADRID'S AIRPORT. BUT THE ANTI-HIJACKING MEASURES DESCRIBED IN STATE 20494 ARE MOSTLY NOT BEING TAKEN. IN EMBASSY VIEW THIS STEMS FROM POLARIZATION OF RESPONSIBILITY AND RELUCTANCE SPEND MONEY, EITHER AIR MINISTRY'S, DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF SECURITY'S OR IBERIA'S.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CIVIL AVIATION, SECURITY, ANTIHIJACKING PROCEDURES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 04 SEP 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: shawdg
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974MADRID05551
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740244-0975
From: MADRID
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740976/aaaacmn tel
Line Count: 92
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: STATE A-1043, FEB 5, 1974
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: shawdg
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17 JUN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <17 JUN 2002 by elyme>; APPROVED <27 FEB 2003 by shawdg>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CIVAIR: AIRPORT SECURITY
TAGS: ETRN, SP
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005